

Ron Lasch, with 41 years of service in the House of Representatives, knew the precedents of the House. He knew about the ways in which this House ran. He also knew the personalities of the House of Representatives.

I think that he epitomized what is so good about this institution. He reflected the very best of this institution. Ron could be sarcastic, he could sometimes even be caustic, but he was always honest. He told Members in a way that was extraordinarily honest about what he thought, about what was going on, and his views about things.

I think that was extraordinarily important, because we got an unvarnished view of what was happening around this place from Ron Lasch. He is the person we relied on when we came to the floor to help us understand what the votes were about, what the procedures were about, about what the time frame of what we were going to be doing would be, how we could proceed when we had a question about how should we handle a parliamentary issue. He was the one who helped us understand that. He is the one who helped us get the rules right. He is the one who, when the Republicans came into the majority 6 years ago, I think made it possible for us to make that transition so much more smoothly than we might otherwise have made.

So I just want to say to my friend Ron Lasch that we are going to miss him tremendously. We thank him for the service that he has given to this country, and, most particularly, to the House of Representatives.

But I also want to thank him very personally for the friendship and what it has meant to work with him and to know him for these last 41 years. He is not gone from among us. He will continue to be that friend of mine. But I will certainly miss him in the professional capacity that he has served. I know that many of my colleagues would join in this sentiment. We wish him well. We hope to see him back on the floor of the House of Representatives from time to time.

I thank my good friend the gentleman from Texas for yielding this time to me this afternoon.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to join in the accolades for Ron. There is a phrase that a lot of us use called "institutional memory." Ron Lasch is the institutional memory, at least on the Republican side, of the procedures here in the House.

I think it is well-known that I am a Congressman who lives in Texas and visits Washington, and I try to find the first plane out of town after the last vote. I used to check with TRENT LOTT when he was the minority whip and then Newt Gingrich, and now that we are in the majority I will check with Tom Delay or Dick Armey. But when I want to really know, I will go to Ron Lasch, and he always knows when we can leave.

So, in typical fashion, he has gone on leave to take his vacation. He is not of-

ficially gone yet, but we are not expecting to see him on the floor very often anymore. So I join in accolading Mr. Lasch as a friend of mine. I do not know him as well personally as the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), but he is certainly a good man.

THE DEVASTATION OF CANCER

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about a terrible word, a terrible six letter word, it is one of the most frightening words in the English language, and that word is cancer, C-A-N-C-E-R.

If you have ever been in a doctor's office and had that word spoken in a personal way, or been with a loved one when that word has been spoken about their physical condition, it sends chills literally into your heart.

Cancer kills hundreds of thousands of Americans each year, and millions worldwide. In this Congress we spend billions of dollars researching cures for cancer. In this Congress in and the last Congress we passed close to a dozen bills to try to address what can be done to seek redress for the disease. It is a disease that knows no socioeconomic boundary; it knows no geographical boundary. It is literally a six letter word that chills us to the very core of our souls.

Most of us, fortunately, tend to look at cancer more academically or in a statistical sense, and we do not have to address it in a human sense. But there are times when we do. Now is one of those times.

I want to humanize cancer on a very personal basis this evening. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), who was just here, informed me that his brother John Kolbe died of liver cancer last year. We have in this body the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) who lost a daughter to cancer within the last year.

We are not used to congressmen and congresswomen and senators and public officials really being looked at as real people. Most of the time the general public looks at us as some sort of a political icon or something, but we are real people and we have real families, and, for some of us, we have medical problems that border on the tragic.

I have a brother, John Barton. John is 43 years old. He is a District Judge in Fort Worth, Texas. He is married. He has two beautiful sons, Jake and Jace. Jace is about to have a birthday, July 22, a beautiful wife, Jennifer, an outstanding career in the community.

About a year-and-a-half ago John Barton was diagnosed as having a cancer behind his nose, the ethmoid sinus cavity. The particular kind of cancer he was diagnosed with is a very rare form of cancer called a squamous cell carcinoma.

At that time he was given little chance to live more than 6 months to a year. Obviously, he was very concerned, his family was very concerned. We were able to get him in touch with some of the leading medical experts in the United States, and, thanks to the

good work of the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), who is a subcommittee chairman of one of the Committee on Appropriations subcommittees, he had been able to get money invested in a special kind of proton beam accelerator at Loma Linda out in California. They had had some success in treating cancers that were inoperable.

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John's cancer behind his nose, between the optic nerve and the olfactory nerve, the decision was made that it would be very difficult to surgically remove it, so they agreed to try to treat him with this proton beam radiation. Again, I cannot say enough about the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and the work he has done to provide the funding for that facility. It bears his name, the Jerry Lewis Treatment Facility. My brother went out there; and in May of last year, John was given a clean bill of health, that the squamous cell cancer in his ethmoid sinus was gone. We literally thought that it was a medical miracle and religious miracle that he was cancer-free.

He went back to Texas and regrew his hair, regained weight, was living a normal life, and in January of this year, January of 2000, he got to feeling a little bit under the weather and he went in to see the doctor and they took a blood sample and his liver function was off the chart.

So they did a medical biopsy of the liver and found out that he had dozens, if not hundreds, of liver cancer tumors in his liver. They performed a round of tests, and first it was indeterminate whether this was a new cancer or a metastasized version of the cancer that had been in his sinus. Finally, the doctors decided that it was a metastasized squamous cell moderated carcinoma from the ethmoid sinus, and they gave him 3 to 6 months to live in February of this year. We had gone through this the year before; and so again, John was in shock and his mother and his wife and myself as one of his brothers, his brother Jay, his sister Jan, his friends.

So John decided to try to seek both spiritual assistance and medical assistance. He has gone through a number of treatment options. He has been treated with at least four different kinds of chemotherapy and was in an experimental protocol that we thought might help him; but last week, his liver bilirubin level, which is a measure of the efficiency of the liver, and for you and I, a normal bilirubin count would be one, my brother's is over 20. Life cannot be sustained at that level.

So I take the floor this evening to ask my colleagues if they are aware of a treatment somewhere in their district, somewhere that there is a researcher doing research on metastasized cancers that migrate to the liver, call me and I will get in touch with my brother's doctors.

In Texas, there is a famous Texan named William Barrett Travis who was